

AMERICA'S ULTIMATE GOAL IN THE WORLD

SUMMARY: From Founding Fathers to recent Presidents, America's underlying goal has always been the freeing and uniting of peoples, and her ultimate goal—a democratic world federation. Her foreign policy successes after 1947 were based on the realization that it was above all by uniting existing democracies that she could work toward the goal in this era. The goal itself, however, was kept muffled. It must be made explicit if American foreign policy is to recover its vitality and consistency.

In an era when U.S. foreign policy seems bogged down by inertia and partisan politics, when the rest of the world has all but given up on looking to America for leadership (even if it has nowhere else to look), when notions of international statesmanship and global vision seem merely distorted memories of the past, it is almost impossible to imagine that there ever was or ever could be an ultimate overall goal for U.S. foreign policy. There is even the nagging fear, in the lingering tendencies of the post-Vietnam era, that to embark on a grand strategy toward a shining goal is at best naive, and at worst will lead to crushing failure and further loss of American prestige in the world.

Yet it was no less a philosopher than C.E.M. Joad who defined loss of goal as "decadence," and no less a theorist of international realism than Hans Morgenthau who decried the loss of "organic connection" between day-to-day policies and "the innermost purposes of the nation."¹ Today we can see the decadence of a goal-less superpower before us. U.S. foreign policy has thrashed about from Administration to Administration for two decades, with much irritable reaction to events abroad, but with little common goal to impart firmness to its will or constan-

cy to its orientation. America badly needs to define her goal in the world, or perhaps simply to recognize that she has a goal.

What America's Goal Has Always Been

In fact there has always been a goal implicit in the very nature of this country, a goal that has lain behind America's most effective international policies in this century. It is a goal worthy of the best we have, an ideal which both we and the world desperately need to see upheld today, a responsibility which no other country can possibly shoulder, a job for which the United States, by its tradition, is uniquely qualified. That goal is the freeing and uniting of all peoples in a democratic world federation.

Freedom, federalism and growth are central to America's nature. The American Union, as a growing federation of free people, has always been a growing force for freedom and unity in the world. Often has America been called the "last best hope of

¹ Hans Morgenthau, *The Purpose of American Politics* (NY: Knopf, 1960), p. 3.

man." When new waves of immigrants cross her borders, or when students demonstrating for democracy in China invoke her name, they remind us how important still is the hope she gives the world.

To be an American is more than to live in a particular geographical area. It is to be part of a great ongoing drama of ever-expanding horizons. The underlying theme of this drama has always been the pursuit of world democracy.

Federalism in the Marshall Plan and NATO

The freeing and uniting of peoples were not only the basic principles of the founding of the American federation, they were also the basic principles of America's most important foreign policy successes of the 20th Century: the Marshall Plan and NATO.

The prime movers of these initiatives in the State Department, Theodore Achilles, John Hickerson and Will Clayton, always attributed their inspiration to *Union Now*, the book by Clarence Streit which called for a federation of the Western democracies as the core around which an eventual democratic world federation would be built.

The federative inspiration behind NATO is elaborated in "The Ultimate Goal of NATO," pp. 16-17 below. The federative inspiration of the Marshall Plan is even clearer.

The Marshall Plan provided the first real impetus for European unification. This should not be surprising. The initial inspiration for it (and for much of America's leadership in building multilateral economic structures in the period) came from Will Clayton, Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs and a lifelong active proponent of Atlantic federation as a nucleus for world federation. General Marshall himself joined the Council of the Atlantic Union Committee in 1955, describing its work as a continuation of his efforts in 1947.²

Few people remember this. The Marshall Plan is explained today mainly in terms of economic aid to a devastated Europe, with a bow to General Marshall and perhaps to George Kennan. The inspirational sources of America's greatest foreign policy successes are practically unknown. As a consequence, American foreign policy makers are deprived of the anchor they most need in their search for a successful foreign policy orientation for the future.

The Presidents of the postwar period, Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy, all shared the goal of a union of Atlantic democracies and the ultimate hope of a united and democratic world. Kennedy even spoke publicly of this vision in a "Declaration of Interdependence" on July 4, 1962.

However, democratic union was never presented to the public as the concrete ultimate goal of the Marshall Plan or the North Atlantic Treaty for fear that isolationists would use it to mobilize opposition and perhaps even kill these initiatives. NATO and its sister organizations, with all their importance and also all their institutional limitations and inconsistencies, came to be seen as ends in themselves rather than as steps to a greater end.

Suppression of the ultimate goal has since backfired. NATO is too often pictured today in terms of military spending, American hegemony and the risk of nuclear war, rather than in terms of the generation of peace in Europe which its critics have come to take for granted. NATO has lost the idealism and inspiration of its early years; people have forgotten how seriously political un-

ion was being discussed in the period of its formation. Its spokesmen and advocates today defend it as a necessary if distasteful military arrangement rather than boosting it as a step forward toward the union and the better world its founders had intended. When it runs into problems it can see no way out except to step backward.³

Federalism in America's First Return to the World Arena

Looking back farther, it becomes apparent that the goal of democratic federation, far from being a novel or arbitrary idea in the 1940s, was an inevitable part of any serious U.S. foreign policy. It was prominent from the first in efforts to emerge out of isolationism.

The U.S. never intervened in European power politics for the sake of merely playing the game unchanged. The U.S. always had higher goals, goals more appropriate to the developing needs of a civilization undergoing deep changes—economic growth, technological and communications explosions, increasing interdependence—the very same changes that were forcing America to involve herself in Europe again.

Leading figures in the Anglo-American rapprochement at the turn of the century looked forward to an Anglo-American federal union as a way of insuring a stabilizing predominance of democratic power in the face of rising German power. But isolationism was still too strong; World War I came instead.

The same hope was expressed in different form in the first years of the war in a movement for a League to Enforce Peace. Many of its goals were taken up by Woodrow Wilson. But it was watered down into the League of Nations. American participation was blocked anyway by a minority of the Senate, and the Anglo-American Treaty of Guarantee to France was dropped completely. World War II was the price.

In the 1940s, the United Nations was watered down still farther, far enough to get past both Stalin and the Senate—but too far to achieve even its minimal goals. This time the idea behind it remained in the air and in the minds of public servants, finally to take substantial form in NATO and the related institutions of democratic collaboration.

Intercontinental Federalism In America's Founding

Looking back still farther, to the very birth of America, we can see finally the root of America's goals in the unfinished business of her Founders. We can see that the goal of international federal democracy was considered most seriously while the die was being cast, before it was possible for people to settle down into contentment.

In 1754 Benjamin Franklin proposed a **plan** to join the colonies with each other and with Britain in a **political union**. In the twilight of his life, he still regretted in his *Autobiography* that

² *Freedom & Union* magazine (Washington, D.C., June 1955), p. 14.

³ By contrast, the institutions of European unity have never completely lost sight of their goal of political Union. Their continuing conscious advocacy of a United States of Europe has given them a standard by which to measure their progress and an impetus to move forward rather than backward when they run into problems.

Britain had lacked the wisdom to support his plan and had had to suffer the Revolution instead. Nonetheless, at the end of the Constitutional Convention he took solace that at least America was forming a sound federal union: "Now at length I have the happiness to know that [America] is a rising and not a setting sun," he told the Convention. He promptly wrote a friend in Paris that Europe should also be able to form "a Federal Union and One Grand Republick ... by means of a like Convention."⁴

If Benjamin Franklin was the most complete and well-rounded representative of the spirit of America, George Washington was its most sure-footed proponent.

In 1783 Washington warned the governors of the States "it is yet to be decided whether the Revolution must ultimately be considered as a blessing or a curse" for America and humanity. The issue, he wrote, depended on the success or failure in building a strong federal union.⁵

Democratic union, not separation, was the real guiding star of these, the two most serious Founding Fathers.

They were not alone. During the disputes with Britain, Colonial leaders had authored a variety of proposals for reform of the Empire, more or less along the lines of Franklin's Albany Plan. Only as they were driven to "the calamities of civil war" (as they described it in 1775)⁶ did they put aside these plans. The War then drew a line of blood against broad federalist thinking, and even against all central government. The Founders had a hard enough time in this atmosphere establishing a sound Federal Constitution for America, and had to watch their words about its cosmopolitan implications.⁷

Further, the Founders had no way of knowing that their new draft of a Constitution would prove such an unparalleled success. They understandably reserved for the drawing board their more effusive ideas on it as a model for the world. Little did they realize that this would consign their successors to a lower level of imagination than their own, even after the Constitution had proved its mettle beyond their wildest dreams.

Still, they were able to establish the Federal Constitution, and Alexander Hamilton was able to report in *The Federalist* No. 1 that it was widely felt that its peaceful adoption would prove that it really was possible for humans to establish good government by "reflection and choice" rather than by waiting on "accident and force". It turned out that the growth of the Union, as the world's first stable and extensive democracy, so impressed Europe as to make democracy, until then in disrepute, the aspiration of the entire Western world. This so transformed the Atlantic countries as to enable them all to recognize themselves in one another and end their historic rivalries in a uniquely intimate alliance in the twentieth century.

The growth of the Union and its influence abroad was thus itself America's most spectacular foreign policy triumph. But its implications did not stop there. Thomas Jefferson privately floated a draft treaty establishing joint citizenship for the United States, Britain and France.⁸ Thomas Paine, literary architect of the American Revolution, declared that "my country is the world" and proved he meant it by speaking out for democracy in Britain, America and France at risk of imprisonment and even a death sentence.

Here, in the broad vision of the freeing and uniting of peoples around the world, lies the true goal of America. It has been the guiding light of America's greatest leaders. It has been the inspiration behind America's greatest foreign policy successes. It is

the only possible goal equal to the greatness of the American dream.

Federalism or Isolationism?

Tragically, subsequent generations knew almost nothing of this. They accepted a Europhobic, isolationist interpretation of the Founders. Federalist thinking was driven underground even in the very triumph of the Union. It remained underground, to bubble up in a few select and creative minds in times of need.

For more than a century America was able to grow energetically within an isolationist framework.⁹ Then America began paying the price of isolationist habits in an increasingly interdependent world. Even when finally forced to accept a central role on the international stage, isolationist prejudices persisted. Many American statesmen did find their way back to the ultimate goal of international federation, but generally too little too late, and they continued the tradition of reserving this goal for their private papers.

The United States can no longer ignore the ultimate goal which has inspired and guided its greatest statesmen from the beginning. America must break free of her isolationist fears and accept the role which history has given her: the leading role in the struggle for world democratic union.

The Goal of All Humanity

A democratic world federation is inescapably the ultimate political goal, not only for America, but for all humanity. There is simply no alternative in the nuclear age. Since 1945 this has been acknowledged by the most respected theorists of international

4 Notes of James Madison, September 17, 1787. Franklin to Ferdinand Grand, October 22, 1787.

5 Washington, "Circular Letter to the Governors of All the States on Disbanding the Army," June 8, 1783. This, Washington's first "farewell address," is in many respects superior to his second and better-known one.

6 Continental Congress, "Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms," July 6, 1775.

7 In this atmosphere, it was courageous for Washington simply to state that the justice of the cause for which they had just fought was still in question, and that it depended on forming a strong Federal Government. At the Constitutional Convention, William Patterson taunted the Federalists that their plan for representation in proportion to population was similar to the plans of the Imperial reformers, and railed that he would "rather submit to a monarch, to a despot, than to such a fate." (9 June 1787, notes of James Madison) Franklin tried, unsuccessfully, to calm him by recalling that the same fears had been expressed over Scotland? purely proportional union with England, but Scotland's fate had been entirely felicitous. The Connecticut compromise was the best that could be gained in face of this altitude. It enabled States rights to get so bourn up with a balance of power in the Senate over slavery that only a second civil war could finally subdue the pretensions of State sovereignty raised in the first.

8 Jefferson, Draught of a treaty, enclosed with a letter to John Adams, July 28, 1785.

9 Hamilton thought in *The Federalist* No. 8 that insular security might last "for ages" if the Union held. He had no inkling that the progress of which he was a prophet would so speed up the pace of history that "ages" would be collapsed into a few brisk generations. He was not concerned to prepare people for changes in attitudes that might be needed "ages" down the road; he did not think the people could absorb subtle doctrines, much less hold onto them for ages until they were needed, in any case had no reason to assume that they would make it through the intervening years without further revolutions. This helps to explain why he drafted Washington's Farewell Address in such strict isolationist terms, with little thought to the damage it might do "ages" later.

"realism,"¹⁰ but this necessity had long since been foreseen by philosophers from Immanuel Kant to Bertrand Russell.

For modern democracy no lesser goal can make sense.

Modern democracy is too progressive and expansive for the static ideal of local independence. Whereas democratic periods in ancient city-states were only brief heroic interludes, modern democracy is a vast and enduring system.¹¹ It has enabled human capabilities and interdependence to grow cumulatively, for good *and* for ill. Since this growth must also be governed, the route to *effective* self-government in modern times has not been local sovereignty, but a balance of self-rule and shared rule in an open and growing federal democracy.

America's Destiny

America was founded as an open and growing federal democracy. Until around 1900 she grew faster than her problems, since her federal system kept growing faster than interdependence could encroach upon her. Then she stopped, while interdependence kept growing by leaps and bounds. Her problems began to outpace her capabilities. She has kept abreast at all only through closely intermeshed alliances with her sister democracies, alliances organized by people who looked forward to ultimate federation. She can keep abreast ultimately only through democratic world federation.

Herein lies America's true interest. In the end America's freedom, federalism, prosperity and progress can be secured only in a free, federated, prosperous and progressing world.

In leadership toward this goal lies America's true destiny. America alone has the traditions of federalism and democracy, the breadth of vision and the reserves of influence and resources to gather the many stirrings toward democracy and unity into a common stream. American foreign policy has in fact already been slowly sleepwalking for fifty years toward the goal, but in confused zigs and zags that have led at times to the edge of a precipice. Meanwhile the dangers to humanity have grown still more acute. Now the time is too short, the path too precarious and the summit still too distant, to be able to afford any more sleepwalking. America must now open her eyes, take the summit into her sights, plan the safest path and embark resolutely upon it.

An Intermediate Goal To Guide Policy Today

Acknowledging the goal will not end partisan differences. It will leave plenty of room for political debate. Indeed, it is only then that the real debate will begin: the debate over how to reach the goal in all its difficulty, not how to manipulate the confusion that predominates when the goal is hidden. It will take foreign policy discussion out of the rut of aimlessness and give it a forward-looking focus.

The path will be long and arduous, and most likely indirect. It will have to be planned, corrected and planned again. There will be many turns on the way. Many things will have to be accomplished by peoples in all regions of the world before they will all be sound and compatible pillars for a democratic world federation. Recognition of the final goal alone will not be enough to indicate the immediate direction of movement.

Fortunately there is a nearer goal that does provide a sound direction for immediate movement. It might be compared to a

great plateau on the side of a high mountain. From it, the final peak is clearly visible. We can already aspire to this plateau; we are, indeed, impelled to aspire to it by our daily problems and crises. And we can march toward it directly, so it provides a sound orienting guide for day-to-day policies.

This plateau is a federation of the developed democracies, embedded as a core of world order within a looser community of all free peoples.

A Federation of the Developed Democracies

For the industrial democracies of Europe, America and the Pacific, federation is the only way to *solve* the problems of their interdependence which they acknowledged decades ago.

•It is the only way to *end* the danger of a trade war.

•It is the only way to work together consistently against terrorism.

•It is the only way to get real control over exports of armaments, nuclear fuels and chemical weapons precursors.

•It is the only way to give the Allied *peoples* a say in NATO policy and overcome their sense of helplessness.

•It is the only way to *resolve* the perennial problems of the Alliance so the West can outgrow its preoccupation with intra-Alliance management and face the challenges of the future.

It is, in sum, the only way to take up the gauntlet thrown down by the founders of the Alliance institutions. It would provide a core of world order, a nucleus for eventual world federation, and in the meantime would hold before the world a working image of the goal and the hope.

A Community of All Democracies

The core federation of industrial democracies must be open to take in newly industrializing democracies, so it will be able to grow toward an eventual integrated world federation. But a truly integrated world is still a long way off. A looser community of all democracies is needed meanwhile, as a framework for the world to grow toward integration.

It is neither conceivable nor desirable that the developed nations would simply open their borders to be flooded with impoverished immigrants. This would reduce all to the level of poverty and instability of the Third World. The goal of federalism is not to undermine the achievements of societies **but** to integrate the achievements of societies—not to lower everyone to a level but to raise everyone to a level... and a level that is peaceful

¹⁰Hans Morgenthau recognized many times that nuclear weapons rendered his power politics system hopelessly contradictory and necessitated the general goal of world government. In the one book where he turned his attention from the "interests" of America to *The Purpose of American Politics* (NY: Knopf, 1960), he recognized that the particular road to this goal was inescapably to build a "Free World Order, i.e., "a viable international order that would translate common interests into a common purpose [and] fuse the power of individual nations," i.e., "a confederation of [Western] states merging their most vital activities in the fields of foreign policy, defense, finance, and economics." He added that these tasks "were not a matter of choice for America. It could reject them only by being unfaithful to its purpose and oblivious of its power." (pp. 179, 182).

¹¹Hobbes' and Locke's idea of cumulative progress within stable government, and Hume's theory of the softening of factions in an extended republic, provided foundations for modern democracy, alongside the practical breakthrough of British representative government. Madison and Hamilton brought these themes together in modern federalism.

and sustainable and opens out upon new hope and progress, not upon decay.

Mere leveling does not bring sustainability. Mere spreading of present forms of industrialization might only multiply the threat to the biosphere. Imagine the whole world polluting and using non-renewable resources at the rate of the industrial countries!

The world faces a race between the problems created by technology and the solutions created by technology *and by human arrangements for governing the effects of technology*. A slow-down of technological progress would only insure that ecological problems would continue to pile up faster than solutions. The pioneering countries must rather pioneer more rapidly, and more efficiently and responsibly, by pooling their resources, their research *and their regulatory powers* in the widest possible common market federation.

On the frontiers of present research there are non-polluting technologies which, if fully developed, would substantially reduce the threat which growth and prosperity pose to the environment. A fully integrated First World economy would give these new technologies the widest room for advance. A community of all democracies would encourage their pursuit, and establish avenues for their spread and adaptation in the developing nations.

The broad community could be empowered to:

- Uphold democratic practices as legally recognized standards for political legitimacy.
- Foster regional integration, and help plan and implement links between development aid and regional integration (as in the Marshall Plan).
- Organize North-South economic cooperation and global trade and investment compacts, perhaps akin to the Lome' conventions.

This would give democracies in the Third World security in their freedom, and thus a firm political foundation for development. It would also give them wider and more stable markets. Economic development and stabilization of democratic traditions would in time transform the societies of the South into sound pillars for global federation. And the community itself, by assisting in transitions to democracy and admitting new member countries as they became democratic, would build in this era toward the unity of all humanity.

A Four-Pronged U.S. Policy Thrust

The U.S. can move the world toward democratic federation with a four-pronged policy of:

1. Promoting democracy wherever it is weak or non-existent
2. Supporting regional integration movements in Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific.
3. Joining in a common Congress of the industrial democracies, to give the people a say in their common business and provide the political impetus finally to resolve their common problems.
4. Joining in an association of the entire world's democracies as the first step toward a community of all democracies.

Making America's Goal Explicit

There are plenty of quiet steps the United States can and should take along these lines. But quiet steps are not enough. In the face of crisis they betray an attitude of drift, not leadership. The essence of leadership is to rally the people with boldness to their own true goal. The first step is to understand what the goal is.

America awaits the President who dares to be a true statesman—to identify with the country's historic development and prospects, and to clarify for the public its course in the present era on the way to its destiny.

The true American statesman will identify with the struggle of America's greatest leaders, Franklin and Washington and Lincoln, for the idea that freedom grows hand-in-hand with union. The true statesman will identify with America's achievement in building a free society across the Continent and on out into the Pacific Ocean ... with the close links between America's growth and the growth of democracy worldwide ... and with the great unfitted work of America, in the aftermath of two terrible world wars, in drawing together the democracies of the world. The true statesman will not bemoan that the Germans and Japanese have become prosperous and productive, but will see in their growth, as the British saw in Canada's growth, "the condition of our greatness," and will strive to complete the work of drawing them together with America. And the true statesman will see that he, finally, is free to speak clearly of the underlying purposes that America's Founders could speak of only under their breath.

America's national purpose mandates boldness. Unless the nation dares to see and act on the full scope of its purpose, it will someday fall behind the rush of history and let slip the vital tension between its hopes and the hopes of the world. That slippage has already begun as interdependence has grown acute. This is the real source of America's feelings of sloth and decadence and loss of purpose in the world. Every day that American leaders mortgage their statesmanship to crisis management, America runs the risk of losing her grip on her special relation to the hopes of the world.

A. move by America to clarify her national purpose and establish it as the centerpiece of her public effort would reverberate around the world. It would bring a new burst of hope for both freedom and peace.

It would place America back clearly in the forefront of world progress, as she was in the nineteenth century when the growth of the Union made such an impression on the world. It would be the finest embodiment of renewed American self-confidence, and would give notice to the world that the American dream has not yet reached its apex.

The present Administration understands how much America needs to look to the future for her glory and not only to the past. Unfortunately it is not as easy for Americans today to anticipate future glories as it was when they were expanding across the Continent. Yet if the United States of America is ready to recognize that her past growth is but a great start toward the building of a United States of the World, then the people will be able once again to visualize a future far greater than the past. They will set to build that future. Then will it indeed come to pass that America's days of greatest glory are yet to come.